



Queen Anne Cobblestone

The Newsletter of the Queen Anne Historical Society

May 2015

Five Corners Hardware: 75 and going strong

By Michael Herschensohn, PhD.

Five Corners Hardware, Marilyn Monroe, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, and your author all share a June 1 'birthday.' Visit Five Corners on the weekend of June 27 for a party with cake, savings, and great hoopla for the whole neighborhood to celebrate the store's 75th anniversary. Operated at the intersection of Third West, W. McGraw, and W. McGraw Place, it is surely one of few Seattle businesses still operated by the same family after 75 years.

The Queen Anne Historical Society's book *Queen Anne: Community on the Hill* erroneously notes (p. 163) that "Uncle Sam, Jr." began business here with \$500 in insurance money. According to family lore, Sam collected just \$200 for losing a finger in an on-the-job accident when he lost control of his saw during an epileptic seizure. It turns out Sam's employer was his dad, building contractor Samuel F. Jensen, Sr. It must have been workers' compensation that paid the money, but it was enough to go into business. With the slowdown of the construction business during World War II, Sam, Sr. went to work with his son. After the war, Sam, Jr.'s brother John became the third family member working at the store. Another son, Gordon, owned the building. Gordon was a driver for bakeries and later became a leader in the local Teamsters union. Sam, Sr. and wife Marie also had two daughters, Violet and Mary Ellen.

One night toward the end of the war, probably in 1945, one of the Jensen sons invited his buddy Jim Forkey

home for dinner with the family. Jim, a Spokane native, and the Jensen boy were stationed at Fort Lewis. After dinner Jim espied Violet Jensen. They married in 1946 and had two daughters, Janice and Jean. In 1961, Jim bought the store and ran it until his retirement on June 1, 1985, the 35th anniversary of its opening. Violet and Jim's daughter Jean Forkey Shook bought the business from her father. In 1987, Jean inherited the building from her Uncle Gordon. She ran the day-to-day business while her husband Larry

Shook managed the finances. In 2005, Jean passed ownership to her son Brian.

When the building went up in 1910 and as late as 1940 when the store opened, it sported a brick veneer over a wooden frame.

In 1983, vinyl siding hid this veneer, and aluminum windows replaced the historic wooden windows. Not unlike many Seattle two-story commercial buildings of the time, the ground floor retail space wraps around a central single-run staircase that reaches from the street to four second-story apartments. Stores were located on either side of the stairs.

In 1940, Sam, Jr. bought the building from Stella E. Herren and Joseph A. Meyer who operated two separate stores there. According to the 1940 Polk's Seattle City Directory (p. 541), the Five Corners Grocery occupied 301 W. McGraw while the Five Corners Paint Store filled the space on the west side of the stairs at 305. The next time you pay for your spackle, paint, light bulbs, or garden supplies, look up; you'll see the beam that replaced the

dividing wall between the two shops.

The survival of Five Corners Hardware is quite amazing in this age of Lowe's and Home Depot. It proves that DIY is deeply ingrained in the blood of Queen Anne homeowners and that the store meets an important community need. Thelma Wilkes, a post-WWII Queen Anne Park resident, reports that she and her husband Vince had an account at Five Corners Hardware and bought much of the building material there for their 1950 house. Like many early- and mid-20th-century Queen Anne residents, the Wilkes were a working-class couple: Vince was a driver for Seattle Transit/Metro, and Thelma worked as an office manager.

The memory of two top-of-the-Hill hardware stores by old-time residents such as 75-year-old John Gessner proves that the neighborhood's love of stepping out for a nut, bolt, or utility knife goes deep. Much as we miss not having two hardware stores on Queen Anne, the Five Corners Hardware store probably does as much as any other local business to win the neighborhood's outstanding 89 out of 100 walkability score.

The Queen Anne Historical Society wishes Five Corners Hardware a very happy 75th birthday!



Five Corners Hardware

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Queen Anne Historical Society

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Member spotlight: Florence Helliesen on “our first and last home”

By Florence Helliesen

To say Florence Helliesen is an expert on Queen Anne Park is an understatement of most broad proportions. She has a passion for the twisting streets that elevates her extensive research and collection of the community's history to a wonderfully personal level not often seen in scholarly halls. As a resident of Queen Anne Park for nearly 40 years she has become her own important piece of the area's history. This is why we've chosen Florence as our subject in our debut "Member Spotlight" piece. We hope you enjoy her story in her own words.

At the time we began looking for a home, my fiancé worked out of his partner's place on Kinneer and I was teaching in Redmond. We did not want to live in the suburbs, and while we liked the charm of the Montlake and Madison Park neighborhoods we had not found the right home. We discovered the Queen Anne Park neighborhood when we initially saw a listing on a house across the street that still wasn't quite right for us. We kept looking though because we loved the area. We were attracted by the beauty of the neighborhood; the views; having the power lines behind the homes, rather than in front; the styles of the homes; the curving streets; and the diversity of the residents.

Two months later—during the “hot” market of 1977—we saw a by-owner listing on Conkling Place West. There were two full-price offers on our \$70,000 brick home the first day and we won because we did not have to go FHA. Price wars existed even then. My husband was afraid that we were buying at the top of the market... Thirty-eight years later we are still here and the value of our home has increased ten-fold. AND our love affair of the neighborhood continues to grow.



When we moved into Queen Anne Park there were many rumors about its history: One persistent one was that it was supposed to have been a gated golf-course community. Given the topography of the area, it had always been difficult for me to believe that could have been so. I am retired, love history, and love to write, so I decided to dig deep to see what I could learn. After many hours spent in libraries, archives, and old newspapers I learned a lot: <http://www.qahistory.org/queen-anne-park.html>.

Much of my research was published in the Queen Anne News last April and May, but our QAHS site now contains slideshows of many old articles, photos, deeds, plats, contests, and covenants. NO golf course was included in any of the plats, articles, or photos. The home—currently on the market—that was rumored to have been a clubhouse was purchased personally by the developer when the remaining lots had to be returned to the original owner of the plat in 1928. It was subsequently bought and sold several times. To step back in history, check out that home at

3042 10th Avenue West.

The homes in Queen Anne Park were intended to be for the average family, but our neighborhood today contains—like much of Queen Anne—homes out of the price of the “average” family. They are still well-maintained and charming and the yards are beautifully landscaped. Queen Anne Park has survived the Depression and unfinished homes; ramblers were built among the Tudors and Spanish-style houses. Now, Queen Anne Park is a beautiful, quiet, friendly, diverse neighborhood, close to transportation, culture, and top-of-the-Hill shopping. There are many beautiful homes, but our favorite house—not the biggest or most expensive—is OURS!

I was able to glean many tidbits of history about our house and neighborhood and encourage you to do the same for yours.

To see the beauty of Queen Anne Park and learn a little more of its history, please join us for the walking tour on Aug 29.

President's Letter

By Michael Herschensohn, PhD.

The society's board is delighted to share the news that on May 1, 4Culture announced the award of \$10,000 to fund the Queen Anne Historic Context Statement for the period 1962-2012. Historic context statements are suggested in the Secretary of Interior's Standard for Historic Preservation. The evaluation of properties for landmark eligibility involves an assessment of the significance of a property in terms of the history of the relevant geographical area, the history of associated historical themes or subjects, and within an historical and contemporary time frame—in other words, its context.

Historic context statements provide the framework for future historic building surveys, historic districts, and landmark nominations. Florence K. Lentz and Mimi Sheridan completed the first Queen Anne Historic Statement in October 2005. You can find it on our website at <http://www.qahistory.org/pdfs/historic-project-context.pdf>. The society's work strategizing for the grant application was led by our Historic Preservation Committee, yours truly, community member Leanne Olson, and board member Nicole Demers-Changelo who is our project lead. The committee sees the completion of the Historic Context Statement as an important first step in documenting and eventually protecting the important buildings and places that have impacted our neighborhood following the end of the 1962 World's Fair.

The 2012 cutoff date was chosen for a variety of historical reasons. The most important of which is the difficulty in assessing the significance of very recent changes to the built environment. We have engaged the services of Historic Resource Associates to complete the statement which will be researched and written by Chrisanne Beckner who heads

the company's Olympia office. She is a specialist in field survey and archival research.

I am sorry to announce that Tim Barrick is stepping down as our webmaster after an amazing four years during which he rebuilt our site, corrected uncountable errors, and make truly great suggestions for updated entries and entire new ones. It is terribly hard to come up with appropriate words of thanks. Tim's incredible web talents transformed the image the society projects online and made us a significantly more professional-looking organization. It is particularly noteworthy that Tim did all this work as a totally in-kind contribution to the well-being of the Queen Anne Historical Society and the greater good of our community.

There are multifold upshot of Tim's resignation. The first is that we would be thrilled to identify a technology wizard who might be interested in joining our board of directors. The second is that we will soon be redesigning our website and moving to a WordPress platform that is more user-friendly than using Dreamweaver for modifying the site. The third is that we will need to find someone to convert our existing website to WordPress. We will be applying to 4Culture to fund the transition.

At the May 28 meeting we'll review the year's activities and electing a new board of directors for the 2015-2016 year. The slate is now coming together, and there is still plenty of time for members who are interested in participating more fully in the society's work to join the board now. If you are interested, please send me an email as soon as you get this newsletter (info@qahistory.org) as I will be out of town until the meeting.

Board of the Queen Anne Historical Society

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Val Thomas to speak at May 28 meeting

Val Thomas, an important local architect who designed the conversion of West Queen Anne School, will focus his presentation on the Historic Preservation of West Queen Anne School and its conversion into condominiums. Thomas will include how the project was financed, approved by the National Park Service under the National Register of Historic Places, constructed, and occupied. He will show some unit interiors including the conversion of the gym/auditorium into the condominium he occupied for 15 years. The talk will also examine related projects that Thomas has done including Broadway Market—its historic roots and conversion into a mixed-use housing and commercial project—and return to the neighborhood surrounding West Queen Anne and the nearby houses he reports to "have had the good fortune to design and occupy." Light refreshments will follow the talk.

Queen Anne Historical Society

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“KINNEAR HOME”

Kim's Musings

By Kim Turner, Chair of Research Committee

Seeing a home you lived in and loved disappear can feel so similar to saying goodbye to a family or friend. Many of us on Queen Anne Hill have bid farewell to former homes as single-family residences are replaced by modern multiplexes, apartments, and businesses.

I am reminded of this as I viewed the multi-story complex going up where I lived twice in my lifetime, the 110-plus-year-old house at 1207 Sixth Avenue North. It has joined a growing collection of sites where once stood the houses in which I lived: 910 Third Avenue North, 359 Ward Street, 406 Prospect Street, Warren Avenue Grade School, and other vestiges of my past.

The worst of the loss at Sixth North was not the house as much as the last two

Bartlett pear trees, the final two trees of the once vast Pratt Orchard, which swept around the upper level of the southeast slope of the Hill. There were apple trees, cherry, peach, pear and plum, all of which remained continuing their annual output past the year 2000.

Urban farming has seen a surge in recent years, but those of us who had the good fortune to grow up on Queen Anne remember fondly the nearly wild, wonderful fresh fruit which grew all over the Hill.

As larger buildings continue to pop up in Queen Anne and across Seattle, I am hopeful these developers will take notice of the parts of land where fruit and veggies once held sway.

Summer tours

Modern Tour, Saturday June 20, 12-3pm: This driving tour around Queen Anne Hill takes an intimate look at the neighborhood's contemporary businesses and residences. Stops include commentary from local architects and scholars and an opportunity to mingle at a post-tour reception at Tin Lizzie.

Cemetery Tour, Saturday Aug 22, 10am-12pm: Led by longtime Queen Anne resident Kim Turner, the cemetery tour views gravesites of people affiliated with the former Queen Anne High School, including faculty, students, and those who planned the school's creation.

Queen Anne Park Tour, Saturday Aug 29, 10am-12pm: Walk along the winding streets of Queen Anne Park for a look at the neighborhood's various architectural styles and history of this planned community.